DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 255 096 HE 016 878

AUTHOR Somers, Coralie; Small, David
TITLE Houston Area Survey of Employment Trends for College Graduates.
PUB DATE Aug 83
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Graduates; Community Surveys; *Employment Opportunities; Higher Education; Job Applicants; *Job Search Methods; *Labor Needs; Metropolitan Areas; Occupational Surveys; Personnel Needs; *Recruitment
IDENTIFIERS *Texas (Houston)

ABSTRACT

The actual and projected level of demand in the employment of college graduates in the Houston, Texas, area was surveyed. Responses from 74 employers provided information on methods for recruiting college graduates and hiring levels for 13 occupational groups, including advertising, architecture, banking, computer software, construction, education, and manufacturing. Data are provided on the frequency of use of 12 recruiting methods, including career fairs, employment agencies, on-campus recruitment, and want-ads. The actual and projected number of hires and percent change from 1981-1982 to 1982-1983 are also reported. A projected decrease of 19 percent in the employment of entry-level college graduates for all employers in 1983-1984 was found, along with an actual 30 percent decrease in employment of this group for 1981-1982 to 1982-1983. Campus recruitment was the most frequently used recruitment method for employers in the fields of public accounting, oil, manufacturing, and oil field service and equipment. Want-ads were also mentioned as a prime source in the categories of manufacturing, architecture/engineering, and oil field service and equipment. The field of education showed more variety in the use of recruitment methods. (SW)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED255096

# HOUSTON AREA SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT TRENDS FOR COLLEGE GRADUATES

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

David Small

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

[ ] This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
[ ] Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Coralie Somers, Counselor
David Small, Director
Career Planning and Placement Center
University of Houston-University Park

August, 1983

HE016 878

## I. METHOD

The purpose of the survey was to determine the actual and projected level of demand in the employment of college graduates in the Houston area. Information was requested from a sample of 224 employers as to the hiring level for the preceding year, the current year, and (projected) for the ensuing year. In addition, the survey sought to ascertain the methods employers used, e.g., want-ads, employment agencies, campus recruitment, etc., in the recruitment and employment of college graduates.

Thirteen employer categories were established to obtain comparative data for various occupational groups. The categories were as follows:

1. Advertising and Communications
2. Architecture and Engineering
3. Banking
4. Computer Software
5. Construction
6. Certified Public Accounting
7. Education
8. Manufacturing (non-oil)
9. Oil and Gas
10. Oil Field Service and Equipment
11. Restaurants and Hotels
12. Retailing
13. Utilities and Government

The sample was comprised of employers located in the greater Houston metropolitan area. The time periods used for comparisons in hiring levels corresponded closely with the academic calendar: June 1981 to May 1982 as compared with June 1982 to May 1983. Projected levels of hiring were requested for the period June 1983 to May 1984.

Questionnaires were mailed to department/division heads by name in either the college relations or the personnel office of each employer.

Each subject was asked to indicate the extent to which various methods were used to recruit and employ college graduates. The methods were itemized as follows:

- Career Fairs
- College Resume Books
- Employment Agencies
- Listings Placed With College Placement Offices
- On-Campus College Recruitment
- Previous Employees
- Referrals from Business Associates
- Referrals from College Faculty
- Trade Journal Listings
- Unsolicited Resumes
- Want-Ads
- Walk-In Candidates

A scale reflecting the utilization of each of the above methods of recruitment/employment was developed.

A. Prime Source - 75 to 100 percent of new hires

B. One of Several Sources - 25 to 75 percent of new hires

C. Seldom Used - Less than 25 percent of new hires

D. Never Used

An open-ended request for additional comments was included.

## II. RESULTS

A total of 74 employers (33 percent) returned usable questionnaires. Table 1 shows the relative demand in the employment of entry-level college graduates for the periods indicated and for those employer categories with a minimum of six respondents.

### TABLE 1

### COMPARISON OF DEMAND FOR ENTRY-LEVEL COLLEGE GRADUATES BY YEAR AND EMPLOYER CATEGORY

| Category | Actual # of Hires 1982-83 | Percent Change 1981-82 to 1982-83 | Anticipated # of Hires 1983-84 | Percent Change 1982-83 to 1983-84 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Employers (N=74) | 3715 | -30% | 3016 | -19% |
| Manufacturing, Non-Oil (N=9) | 118 | | 129 | +9% |
| Public Accounting (N=9) | 133 | +8% | 139 | +3% |
| Oil Companies. (N=9) | 539 | -57% | 447 | -17% |
| Education (N=10) | 1907 | -11% | 1526 | -20% |
| Architecture/ Engineering (N=6) | 38 | -40% | 27 | -29% |
| Oil Field Service and Equipment (N=12) | 172 | -70% | 58 | -66% |

The methods used by respective employer groups to recruit/employ entry-level college graduates are shown in Table II. The number of employers indicating each method is indicated in Table 2.

## TABLE II

## METHODS USED BY SELECTED EMPLOYER GROUPS TO EMPLOY ENTRY-LEVEL COLLEGE GRADUATES

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Source - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used - Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Public Accounting (N=10) | Campus Recruitment(8)<br>Recruitment, listings, resume book & faculty (1) | Campus Recruitment(1)<br>Want Ads (1)<br>Previous Employees (1)<br>Employment Agencies (1) | College Resume Books (2)<br>Faculty Referrals(5)<br>Career Fairs(4)<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Trade Journals (1)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (7)<br>Employment Agencies (2)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (8)<br>Walk-In Candidates(6)<br>Previous Employees (5) | Listings (5)<br>Resume Books(3)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Career Fairs(3)<br>Want Ads (2)<br>Trade Journals (6)<br>Employment Agencies (5)<br>Walk-In Candidates(1)<br>Previous Employees (2) |

TABLE II continued. . .

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Sources - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used - Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Oil (N=9) | Campus Recruitment (8)<br>Listings (1)<br>Previous Employees (1) | Campus Recruitment (2)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (1)<br>Walk-In Candidates (1)<br>Previous Employees (1) | Listings (5)<br>Resume Books (5)<br>Faculty (5)<br>Career Fairs (3)<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Trade Journals (1)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Employment Agencies (3)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (6)<br>Walk-In Candidates (3)<br>Previous Employees (6) | Listings (1)<br>Resume Books (2)<br>Referrals from Faculty (2)<br>Career Fairs (4)<br>Want Ads (4)<br>Trade Journals<br>Referrals from Business Asso (4)<br>Employment Agencies (4)<br>Walk-In Candidates (3)<br>Other (1) |

TABLE II continued. . .

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Source - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used - Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Manufacturing (Non-Oil) (N=10) | Campus Recruitment (5)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1) | Campus Recruitment (1)<br>Listings (2)<br>Referrals from Faculty (3)<br>Career Fairs (1)<br>Want Ads (2)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Employment Agencies (2)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (3)<br>Walk-In Candidates (4)<br>Previous Employees (6) | Campus Recruitment (3)<br>Listings (3)<br>College Resume Books (1)<br>Referrals from Faculty (3)<br>Career Fairs (2)<br>Want-Ads (2)<br>Trade Journals (1)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (4)<br>Employment Agencies (3)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (5)<br>Walk-In Candidates (5)<br>Previous Employees (2) | Campus Recruitment<br>Listings (4)<br>College Resume Books (8)<br>Referrals fro Faculty (3)<br>Career Fairs<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Trade Journals (7<br>Employment Agencies (5<br>Unsolicited Resumes (2)<br>Walk-In Candidates<br>Previous Employees<br>Other (1) |

TABLE II continued. . .

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Source - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used - Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Education (N=10) | Campus Recruitment (1)<br>Listings (2)<br>College Resume Books (1)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (1)<br>Previous Employees (1)<br>Other (1) (Candidates with application on file) | Campus Recruitment (7)<br>Listings (4)<br>College Resume Books (2)<br>Referrals from Faculty (3)<br>Career Fairs (4)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (1)<br>Walk-In Candidates (4)<br>Previous Employees (3) | Campus Recruitment (1)<br>Listings (2)<br>College Resume Books (3)<br>Referrals from Faculty (6)<br>Career Fairs (4)<br>Want Ads (1)<br>Trade Journals (1)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (9)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (5)<br>Walk-In Candidates (5)<br>Previous Employees (5)<br>Other (1) | Listings (2)<br>College Resume Books (4)<br>Referrals fro Faculty (1)<br>Career Fairs<br>Want Ads (8)<br>Trade Journals (8)<br>Employment Agencies (9)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (3) |

TABLE II continued. . .

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Source - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used - Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Oil Field Service and Equipment (N=12) | Campus Recruitment (5)<br>Want Ads (2)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Employment Agencies (1) | Campus Recruitment (2)<br>Listings (1)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Previous Employees (3) | Campus Recruitment(1)<br>Listings (3)<br>College Resume Books (3)<br>Referrals from Faculty (4)<br>Career Fairs (2)<br>Want Ads (3)<br>Trade Journals (2)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (2)<br>Employment Agencies (4)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (5)<br>Walk-In Candidates (3)<br>Previous Employees (3) | Listings (2)<br>College Resume Books (4)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Career Fairs (5)<br>Want Ads (1)<br>Trade Journals (5)<br>Referrals from Business Asso (2)<br>Employment Agencies (3)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (1)<br>Walk-In Candidates (3<br>Previous Employees (1) |

TABLE II continued. . .

| Employer Category | Extent Used | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Prime Source - 75 to 100% of new hires | One of Several Sources - 25 to 75% of new hires | Seldom Used Less than 25% of new hires | Never Used |
| Architecture/ Engineering (N=6) | Campus Recruitment (3)<br>Want Ads (1)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (3) | Listings (2)<br>Referrals from Faculty (3)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (1)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (2)<br>Walk-In Candidates (1)<br>Previous Employees (4) | Campus Recruitment (2)<br>Listings (1)<br>College Resume Books (1)<br>Referrals from Faculty (2)<br>Career Fairs (2)<br>Want Ads (1)<br>Trade Journals (2)<br>Referrals from Business Assoc. (3)<br>Unsolicited Resumes (1)<br>Walk-In Candidates (3)<br>Previous Employees (1) | Campus Recruitment (<br>Listings (2)<br>College Resume Books (5)<br>Referrals from Faculty (1)<br>Career Fairs (4<br>Want Ads (4)<br>Trade Journals (3)<br>Referrals from Business Assc (2)<br>Employment Agencies (5)<br>Walk-In Candidates ( |

"Additional comments" were offered from the employer sample as follows:

1. Retailing . . . 50% of our management level employees are promoted from hourly department head positions.
2. Banking . . . We will focus primarily on BBA/Finance candidates this year.
3. Education . . . Those items checked "never used" (i.e., resume books, want ads, trade journal listings, employment agencies, unsolicited resumes) are a result of poor success in those areas.
4. Oil Field Service . . . We have suffered a significant decline in business and therefore don't anticipate much activity for the next year and a half.
5. Oil Field Service . . . Because of the down turn in the oil equipment manufacturing business, we have not done any hiring since April, 1982.
6. Oil . . . Projections for next are strictly guesses at this time.
7. Engineering . . . No entry-level hires for this period expected.
8. Manufacturing, non-oil . . . We require a degree plus experience--2 to 5 years. Few entry-level positions could be available - experience is usually vital to qualify.

## III. DISCUSSION

The study reveals a projected decrease of 19 percent in the employment of entry-level college graduates for all employers in 1983-84. The study further shows an actual 30 percent decrease in the employment of entry-level college graduates from 1981-82 to 1982-83.

As to the methods employers used in the recruitment and employment of entry-level college graduates, respondents in the fields of public accounting, oil, manufacturing, and oil field service and equipment cited campus recruitment most frequently as a prime source. Want-ads were mentioned as a prime source in the categories of manufacturing, architecture/engineering, and oil field service and equipment. The field of education showed more variety among individual respondents in the use of recruitment methods. Six methods were cited at least once as "prime sources" and eight as "one of several sources." On the other hand, 9 out of 10 respondents "never used" employment agencies; 8 out of 10 "never used" want ads or trade journals.

The decrease in the demand for college graduates over the previous two years shown in this study is paralleled by other measures. The level of campus recruitment activity for the same period has been down an average of 35 percent at local universities. The number of job listings received by local universities is down by an average of 20 percent.[1]

Thus, it is expected that 1983-84 college graduates will encounter continued difficulty in obtaining employment in the Houston area commersurate with their education. Those graduates with strong academic records, career-

[1] The universities included in these averages are the University of Houston-University Park, the University of Houston-Clear Lake, and Rice University.

related job experience, and effective job-search skills will probably experience the most success in at least partially offsetting the effects of a depressed job market as highlighted by this study.

We express our sincere appreciation to those employer representatives who participated in this study.